

# New Bernal Journal

April/May 1999

Serving the Bernal Heights Neighborhood of San Francisco

Volume 36 Number 2

## BHNC's challenges – '88 to the present

by Helen Helfer and Mauricio Vela

Our mission remains strong; "To empower the people in efforts to preserve the ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity of Bernal Heights and improve the economic condition of low and moderate income people in Bernal Heights."

We have always prided ourselves on being a multi-ethnic organization, providing programs for our senior neighbors, our at-risk youth, and people of all ages who desperately need a decent place to live in an increasingly expensive community and city.

In 1988, the BHNC had only one senior program, no youth programs, and a housing program that developed new affordable housing and rehabilitated housing for low income home owners. The entire staff consisted of approximately ten people.

As many of you saw at our 20th Anniversary Celebration last November, the Center has survived and thrived during our first two decades and continues our advocacy work with your help and support. Here's a quick look at the BHNC's second decade, 1988-1998.

### Our Youth ARE Our Future

In 1989 we established a new youth services department, which has grown from a two-person to a seven-person staff. With the election of Mayor Art Agnos in 1987, the Mayor's Youth Employment and Education Program, defunded under Mayor Feinstein, was refunded. The Summer Youth Employment and Training program was transferred from the Jamestown Community Center to the BHNC. With help from the Miranda-Lux Foundation, the BHNC now had year-round youth employment services, including non-subsidized employment placement.

In 1993 youth violence was escalating with the use of deadly weapons. Drive-by shootings became commonplace throughout the City. In Bernal, the violence seemed to focus around Precita Park, the Alemany



Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center board member and senior volunteer Alice Gilbeaux at the 1997 Fiesta on the Hill.

Housing Projects, and Bernal Playground. After several drive-bys, over 300 neighbors met with Mayor Frank Jordan at Saint Anthony's School and demanded the expansion of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Program. The community won a full-time gang prevention position, which was split into two part-time jobs. By 1998 the BHNC had two full-time and two part-time workers who focused on our public schools in the Bernal, Excelsior, and Outer Mission districts. The BHNC's successful program is the last gang prevention program currently funded by the Mayor's Office.

As the youth employment and gang prevention programs developed, other gaps in

services surfaced. The Excelsior was becoming the community with the highest juvenile referral rate in the city. Limited services existed in the Excelsior/Outer Mission. In 1993, the BHNC, along with the Mission YMCA and the Precita Center, came together to form the Greater Mission Consortium (GMC). The concept was to end our competition for scarce funds and collaborate around children, youth and family issues with an emphasis on the Bernal, Excelsior, and Outer Mission communities. The GMC opened an office at Ocean and Mission to improve access for young people. The GMC continues to provide case management, childcare, gang prevention, legal, and youth employment services. Between 1993 and 1998, over 7,000 youth have been served through the GMC.

### Who Will House Our People?

In 1988 we saw the groundbreaking for Coleridge Park Homes, our 49 unit development for seniors. Ten years later it's still going strong, providing affordable housing to older neighbors who could not afford to live here otherwise.

In 1989 we began our seven-year building marathon for Market Heights, 46 units of family housing behind the Farmers' Market. When a 1991 referendum attempted to stop it, we won at the polls 61% to 39%. With a huge opening ceremony in 1994,

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Gabriel Marshall and Melinda Mazzetti in the neighborhood-created garden, 1995.

## From isolation to community in south Bernal

by members of the  
South Bernal Action Alliance

We have spent many years working to develop a sense of community here in the south of Bernal. Our purpose is to increase safety and create a living environment that encourages that sense of community.

There are now plans for 22 townhouses to be built at 400 Alemany Boulevard, and proposals for two other developments elsewhere in south Bernal (see article on page 5). These developments will have a major impact on our neighborhood. If we are careful, that impact could be very positive.

Isolation is a major cause of our community problems. Perhaps the reason is the loss of our common spaces. We have come to view common areas—parks, playgrounds, bus stops, corner stores—as places where drug dealers congregate, and our tendency has been to get rid of them whenever possible, avoid them at all times (especially at night), or in the case of playgrounds, fence them in and lock them up. But it's the common areas of the community that hold us together. It is the bus stop, the corner store, the place we go to walk our dogs, the community gardens that keep us in touch with one another. They're the small, everyday areas where we meet and get to know each other.

Our common areas keep us from losing touch. Fifteen years ago, people here had lost touch in a big way. There were drug dealers on corners all over the south side, gunfire at night, graffiti, garbage, no neighborhood watch groups and no interest in forming one. One member tried to get trees planted on her block, and only one person would even talk to her about it. Once we lose touch, we become isolated. Our sense of community stops at our own house walls. We don't know anyone out there, and we don't want to know anyone. We withdraw to our own houses and put bars on the windows. We leave the streets to the dealers.

Mrs. D. is a 70-year-old widow living alone. Several years ago, she had her purse snatched by two teenagers who pushed her down from behind, then fled in a car. She was pretty badly scraped up.

Nine years ago, some neighbors got together and created a little garden for the kids

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Jazz with Randy Craig on piano and Vinnie Rinaldi on drums on Thursday nights at the Hungarian Sausage Factory and Bistro

## The live music scene in Bernal Heights

Choose from jazz, blues, classical music and more

by Valerie Harris

Cortland Avenue has a night life! There is live music almost every night of the week here in our little corner of the city.

The Hungarian Sausage Factory and Bistro (419 Cortland, 648-2847) has featured live music since the restaurant opened seven years ago. Owners Imre and Jutka Mandoke serve "country Hungarian" food, including vegetarian dishes, along with the music, Tuesdays through Sundays. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays features piano jazz duos, including Wednesday's Jacob Aginsky, a talented young Bernal Heights musician who was one of the original "Little People's Workshop" kids (his parents helped found the co-operative). Friday night brings the Pick-pocket Band with accordion, bass, trumpet, and drums, playing American and French bistro music. There is something different every Sunday. April and May bring "Lark"

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plus calendars, classifieds, columns, and much more.

## New Bernal Journal

515 Cortland Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
(415) 206-2140 ext. 108  
fax: (415) 648-0793

### New Bernal Journal Staff

#### Editor

Valerie Harris

#### Editorial Committee

Anne Telford, chair  
Demice Garepis, David Rogers,  
David Shaw, Mauricio Vela,  
Lakenda Wallace

#### Advertising

Valerie Harris, Michael Golojuch

#### Copyeditors

Valerie Harris, Elaine Lewinnek

#### Distribution

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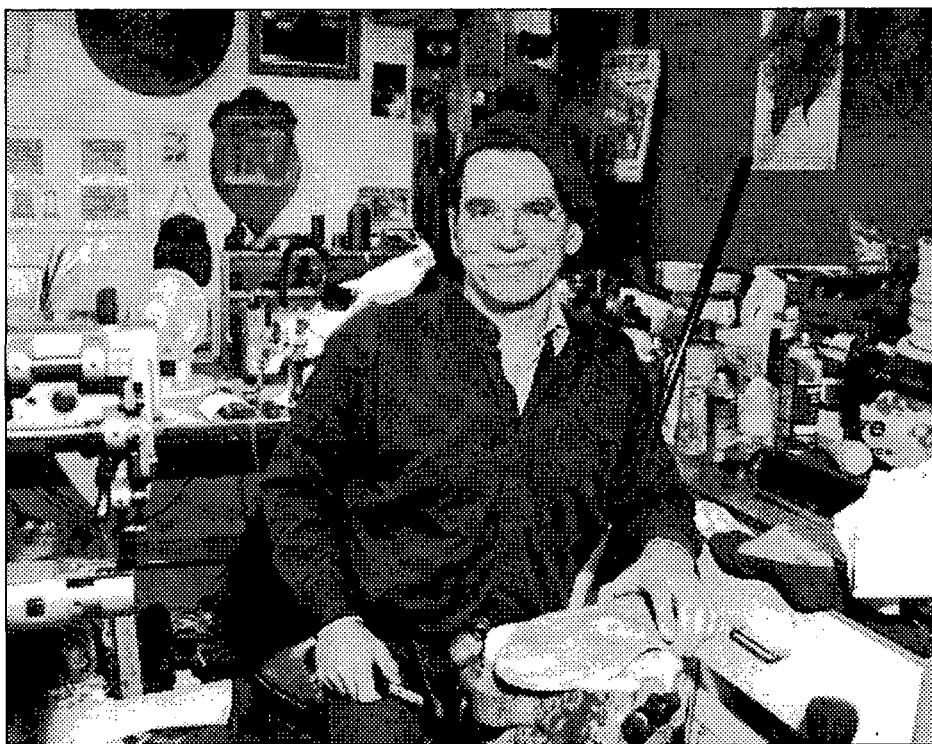
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*Next issue — June/July  
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*New Bernal Journal* is a bimonthly neighborhood newspaper sponsored by the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center. It is dedicated to providing the people of Bernal Heights with their community's news, ideas, issues and events, which support the center mission: "To empower people in efforts to preserve the ethnic, cultural, and economic diversity of Bernal Heights and improve the economic conditions of low and moderate income people in Bernal Heights."

*New Bernal Journal* is distributed door-to-door free to the community of Bernal Heights. Articles express the views of contributors and not necessarily those of *New Bernal Journal* or Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center.



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David Rogers (with Maurice on left shoulder) in his custom leatherwork studio at 813 Cortland.

## Neighborhood great guy moves on

by Valerie Harris

A pillar of our community will soon be leaving us. In April, Bernal Heights mover and shaker David Rogers will leave for Montreal and a new life.

Rogers left Seattle and landed in Bernal Heights in 1981. His community involvement began soon thereafter. Rogers said, "They used to have an annual spring Cortland Avenue clean-up. I was just walking on the street, only here a month or two when I met Helen [Helfer, former BHNC executive director] and Mauricio [Vela, then BHNC center director] cleaning the streets." Street cleaning led to a long-time presence on the BHNC board of directors. Rogers has also been a part of the *New Bernal Journal* by sitting on the editorial board and coordinating distribution for the past seven years.

Rogers was there for the rejuvenation of the Merchants' Association and served as president a number of times. "He's always been the go-between for the merchants and the Neighborhood Center—he understands both sides," said Kathleen Dunphy, owner of Heartfelt.

Rogers has always been there for Bernal Heights. "He always feels that if he's part of the community, he has to give to it," said Dunphy. And give he did. Vela, now execu-

tive director of the BHNC, recalled Rogers's involvement in the annual Fiesta on the Hill. "He would be out at 6 a.m., and then carrying tables back in at 8 p.m." Dunphy remembers him "taking down the holiday decorations [on Cortland from the Merchants' Association] in the middle of January in the pouring rain with no help—he's very dedicated."

According to Imre Mandoki, owner of the Hungarian Sausage Factory and Bistro, Rogers planted tree with Urban Forests and was a very active volunteer for graffiti clean-up when Cortland was battling persistent "taggers." "He was out every morning with a bucket of paint," until the tagging stopped.

Rogers takes with him his custom shoe-making and leather work business, the only one of its kind in San Francisco. His yellow cockatiel, Maurice, will be staying in Bernal, though, in a new home on Santa Marina Street.

We at the *New Bernal Journal*, the Neighborhood Center, and folks all over Bernal Heights will miss David Rogers. As Vela said, "He has a friendly, positive attitude—an unselfish, great guy. We wish him well in his new adventure."

## Men's clothing store now in south Bernal

A big gray block of a building sits on Alemany not far from the Alemany Farmers' Market. In the past it has been a dairy, a sandwich factory, and a fish store. But now inside is 16,800 square feet of men's clothing and accessories at great prices. Clothing Broker Store Manager Steven Walsh explains, "We carry first quality, top rate merchandise. The low prices come from volume plus low overhead."

The store, which opened last Thanksgiving, is the third of a trio of Clothing Broker stores. The others are in Santa Clara and Richmond. The major factor in keeping down overhead is the store hours; they're only open Friday through Sunday.

The variety is impressive. They carry not only plenty of suits and ties, but also sportswear and outerwear. One corner has tuxedos. Walsh also keeps a section well stocked with "big and tall" sizes, which are in great demand. The shoe department stock includes some flashy iridescent silk loafers in red or bright blue, plus rugged boots, Hush Puppies, Italian-made dress shoes, and much more. Hats, belts and other accessories are available, and there is a tailor on the premises.

The Clothing Broker (642-8034) is at 300 Alemany Boulevard.



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Liberty Cafe owner Cathi Guntli at her bakery.

## Cortland Avenue restaurant featured in *Gourmet* magazine

Bernal Heights's own Liberty Cafe was featured in the February issue of *Gourmet*, the premier American food magazine. The restaurant was cited in Caroline Bates's "Spécialités de la Maison; California" section. The Liberty Cafe led off the section with photos of the place and a description of Liberty's "ultimate chicken pot pie." Bates also quotes owner Cathi Guntli on her puff pastry method and mentions "what may be San Francisco's best Caesar salad."

Guntli said the review was "kind of out of the blue. The woman from *Gourmet* had heard about our chicken pot pies—she's from New York or somewhere—and she sent someone out." But Guntli didn't expect such a prominent spot. "It was a real surprise," she said.

Prior to *Gourmet*, the Liberty Cafe had been reviewed many times before, including in *Food and Wine*, *Cooks*, the *Chronicle* and the *Examiner*, and *American Way*, the American Airlines magazine. That's a lot of press for a little restaurant on good old Cortland Avenue. Said Guntli, "I never wanted to be trendy. I always intended for this to be a neighborhood restaurant."

The Liberty Cafe is at 410 Cortland Avenue (695-8777) and is open for lunch Tuesday through Friday, dinner Tuesday through Sunday, and brunch Saturday and Sunday.

## Letter from the editor

Since last September I've been editor for the *New Bernal Journal*. It has been a very special experience for me because Bernal Heights is such a special place. (Yes, I know it's been said over and over again, but it's really true.) But now it is time for me to move on to other endeavors: this is my last issue as editor.

Part of Bernal Heights' specialness is in its size. It's small enough that I can meet someone standing in the check-out line at Good Life and end up with a wonderful story. (I've had a couple of other experiences like that.) At the same time, the amount of local activity surpasses many larger communities. Non-Bernal Heights people who read the paper are invariably impressed by the amount of community involvement that goes on here.

The NBJ now seeks a new editor. Applicants with writing, desktop publishing, and good organizational skills can send applica-

tions to Mauricio Vela, Executive Director, BHNC. (Please see the notice in the classified section for details.)

I would like to thank the many people who have helped to make this paper what it is, starting with the members of the NBJ editorial board; BHNC Executive Director Mauricio Vela, Board Chair Anne Telford, David Rogers, Valentin Porras, Lakenda Wallace, Demice Garepis, and David Shaw. Thanks also to the staff at the Neighborhood Center for their time, energy, and moral support; to Beverly Tharp for her great photos; to Elaine Lewinnek for her copyediting and proofreading help; and to all who have written for, distributed, and otherwise contributed to the paper. We have a great neighborhood here. May the NBJ continue to help us to share the word about Bernal Heights and serve as an inspiration to others.

Sincerely,  
Valerie Harris

## San Francisco Crime Stoppers

Witness a crime? Have direct knowledge of a crime? Make an anonymous phone call to: 1-800-2-GIVE INFO (1-800-244-8346).

San Francisco Crime Stoppers is a non-profit volunteer association of concerned citizens committed to making San Francisco a safer place for all its residents and to educate and inform our communities that any individual can make a real difference.

There are people in every area who either witness or have information that could help solve major crimes, but because of fear or apathy do not come forward. Under guidance of local law enforcement, phone lines have been established to receive confidential calls and offer any volunteer the following: (1) guaranteed anonymity, (2) cash rewards, and (3) a phone number (see above) which is a dedicated line that receives no other type of call.

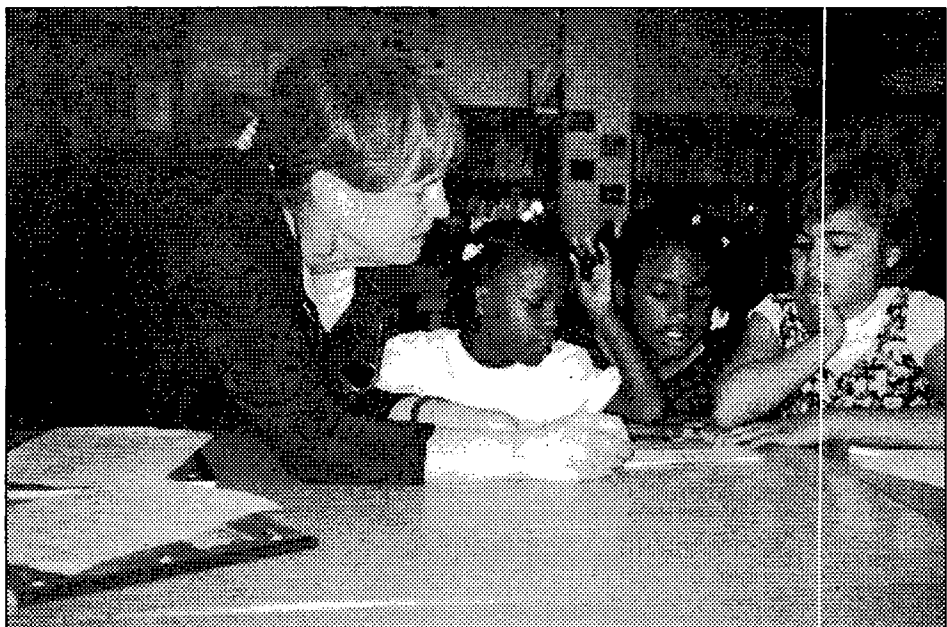
Crime Stoppers exists in towns and cities all over the nation. It was organized in 1976 and has helped solve over 500,000 felony cases and recover more than \$3 billion in stolen property and narcotics. No matter how efficient law enforcement is, it cannot

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### Be heard!

Send your letter to the editor, NBJ, 515 Cortland Ave.,  
San Francisco, CA 94110 (Please, no anonymous submissions.)





Kathleen Ramos, school volunteer with students at Paul Revere Elementary School

## Bernal Heights resident recognized during April's National Volunteer Week, April 18-24

by Jill Wolfson,  
San Francisco School Volunteers

Six children gather around the table in their "Literature Circle" in Denise Savoy's third grade class at Paul Revere Elementary School, reading *Horrible Harry's Secret*. They are excited to see their volunteer, Kathleen Ramos, "Ms. Kathleen," and she is equally excited to see them. The students hold the prized books in their hands and take turns reading about Horrible Harry from where they left off last time.

Ramos facilitates the Literature Circle, guiding the students through the chapters, praising each reader and encouraging them when they are struggling. She checks for reading comprehension and relates the story to their personal experiences.

In the book, when Harry and his classmates draw portraits of each other, they include pictures of things they like around the border. Ms. Kathleen pauses and asks each student what would be drawn around their portrait. "For Jesse, I bet it would be dinosaurs," she says kindly, "What would we draw for you, Ashley?" The students take pride in sharing with each other some of the things they like to do.

This is the setting two mornings a week when San Francisco School Volunteer Kathleen Ramos spends two hours reading with children in Ms. Savoy's classroom. She is involved in the Literature Circle as well as a Hooked on Phonics program.

"I have seen growth in the reading of the students who work with Kathleen in two

ways," says Savoy. "There is an obvious improvement in oral reading, comprehension and writing ability...and in the children's enthusiasm. Kathleen has a love for reading that is obvious and contagious."

Ramos has been a consistent and dedicated star volunteer at her neighborhood school, Paul Revere Elementary, for most of the three-plus years she has been a Bernal Heights resident.

Ramos was a Peace Corps volunteer in Brazil for two years working on community development. Years later she is continuing to develop a community for third graders in which they respect and inspire each other as readers.

Two children in the class described Ms. Kathleen as "funny, nice, not very bossy, and a good reading teacher." One student reported missing recess by choice so that she could spend reading time with Kathleen.

Ramos' favorite thing about volunteering is the creativity and energy of kids and the opportunity to see them grow and develop. "I love reading with them," says Ramos, whose own daughter is 28 and working on a newspaper in Bulgaria. Ramos says that "it's fun being part of the class. It keeps you young."

An aspiring children's book illustrator, Kathleen likes to use visuals as a teaching method. She is very creative and often uses art, games, and audio tapes to encourage reading. For example, Kathleen created a wonderful "Funny Farm," complete with

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## St. Luke's Hospital files antitrust suit

St. Luke's Hospital has filed suit in California Superior Court charging California Pacific Medical Center (CPMC) and its parent, Sutter Health System, with a violation of the state's antitrust law.

In filing the antitrust lawsuit, St. Luke's seeks invalidation of an exclusivity clause in CPMC's contract with Brown and Toland IPA, a physician management group, and recovery of substantial financial damages. The illegal clause prohibits doctors from admitting their HMO patients to St. Luke's Hospital, insisting they use CPMC, even when doctors or patients specifically request St. Luke's. The complaint, prepared by the law firm of Townsend and Townsend and Crew, charges CPMC and Sutter with an illegal restraint of trade.

While fully insured patients represent a large group of healthcare recipients at St. Luke's, the hospital treats indigent, Medi-Cal, low income, and Medicare patients in greater proportion than other hospitals. St. Luke's relies on privately insured patients to maintain the mix of payors necessary to keep its operation financially viable. The exclusivity clause directly affects St. Luke's

long-term ability to operate. The local community depends on the hospital to provide vital emergency medical and critical care services. The hospital also provides \$6.5 million annually in charity care to people in need.

St. Luke's Board Member Bishop William E. Swing characterized the exclusivity clause as "a clear matter of injustice. In the long term, these actions will bring catastrophic harm to the people who live south of Market Street and whose medical needs will be ignored if present wrongs are not put right." Since the hospital's founding, the Presiding Episcopal Bishop of California has held a seat on its board of directors.

St. Luke's is San Francisco's only independent, community-based, full-service hospital. Its capable and caring staff is uniquely culturally qualified to provide high-quality health care with dignity to the South of Market community. An institution of the Episcopal Diocese, it is administered by a local board of directors. Physician and Episcopal priest Rev. Dr. Thomas H. Brotherton founded the hospital in 1871.

# Police Captain's Report

## IMPACT Program youth take a memorable trip

by Captain Rick Bruce,  
Ingleside Station

On Saturday, February 20, 1999, the juvenile members of Ingleside Station's IMPACT Program, along with their police department chaperons, spent the day at San Quentin State Prison. The IMPACT Program has been in existence for several months now at Ingleside Station, and it serves to work with youth who have been arrested for a variety of criminal offenses and who are considered "high risk," based on the decisions they have made thus far in their lives. This program attempts to intervene in these troubled lives by providing adult role models and specific activities which will hopefully make a difference in some (or many) of these lives.

The program has numerous components, and includes everything from jobs workshops to counseling sessions to role-play activities to community service. Of all these varied components, however, the trip to San Quentin is without question the most powerful and thought-provoking. The kids spend the day with a variety of lifers, men who have been sentenced to spend the rest of their days behind bars for crimes ranging from kidnapping to murder. These men, who have volunteered to participate in what is called the SQUIRES Program, have some

very moving and relevant stories to relate to our young charges. Their tales are so powerful that the police officers too find themselves moved and changed.

The point of the program is very basic: If you continue down the path that you are currently walking, you will end up here with us. It is both frightening and enlightening to receive that message as you are standing in a four-by-ten foot cell, or walking through the cramped and dirty group shower areas. Youth program counselors frequently comment that if they reach only one troubled youth, their efforts will have been worth it. I believe that we are reaching more than that in our IMPACT Program, and as I left "Q" that day, I thanked the many members of San Quentin's Squires Program for assisting us in our mission.

Captain Bruce can be reached at 553-1602. [For a young person's first person account of the San Quentin experience, see Reality Check on page 8.]

*Editor's note: Police reports from Ingleside station are available for viewing in the lobby of the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center, 515 Cortland Avenue during the Center's open hours, Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.*



## Work on Bernal Gateway Apartments to start

This eyesore at Mission and Cesar Chavez will soon begin transformation into Bernal Gateway Apartments, a project of the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center Housing Program. We have completed the minor abatement of lead paint and asbestos inside the vacant garage and should begin demolition, including billboard removal, by mid-April. In May the toxic soil remediation and site preparation work should begin. In July we should have our official groundbreaking celebration for this beautiful 55-unit affordable family housing development. Bernal Gateway will include an on-site Child Development Center for 40 infants and toddlers, and a Community Support Center offering employment readiness, computer access, and other services to Bernal Gateway and neighborhood residents alike. The marketing and rental application process will begin in late spring or summer of next year. Stay tuned for future updates.

## Legislative Report: A legislative spring

By Assembly Majority Leader  
Kevin Shelley

For the first time in sixteen years, we have Democratic majorities in both houses of the Legislature, as well as a Democratic governor. So while we are excited to have a Democratic governor for the first time in nearly two decades, we are also cognizant of the fact that good policy is only passed when there is co-operation from Republicans and Democrats. We hope to have a chance to make a real difference.

Governor Davis said in his State of the State Address that education would be prior-

ities number one, two, and three in his administration. He has proposed adding \$400 million more for public schools. The Governor's education agenda revolves around four major pieces of legislation to: increase reading proficiency; establish exit exams for high school graduates; improve teacher quality through peer reviews; and establish school accountability through new standardized tests. Our education agenda seeks to ensure that every child has equal academic opportunities, irrespective of race or income.

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## THE BHNC STORY

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Market Heights is home to the most racially and economically diverse community within Bernal. Susan Cervantes and students from Precita Eyes painted the colorful murals on the Farmers' Market wall, a welcoming montage for shoppers and residents alike.

Also in 1989 we initiated our Special Needs Housing program, a collaboration between the Center and social service providers for residents of each house. Our first four-unit building in need of major rehabilitation was Moultrie Street House. We partnered with Progress Foundation, a long-respected mental health agency that provided support for the residents living there. Our next two two-unit homes were developed with the Black Coalition on Aids, followed by two two-unit and one four-unit building with the Women's Alcoholism Center, and a nine-unit home for women with AIDS in collaboration with Lutheran Social Services. We currently are working with Catholic Charities in a rehabilitation/new construction seven-unit home for women with AIDS and their children, the first of its kind in our city.

Our oldest program, the Community Housing Rehabilitation Program (CHRP) is entering its 14th year. Because of the dire need, most homeowners we've assisted have been elderly—"house rich and income poor." Basic code repairs, such as wiring, plumbing, rotted porches, and stairs are included in this city program. In addition to CHRP, we've worked consistently this past decade with Christmas in April, a one-day, city-wide, corporate-sponsored housing rehabilitation effort. Last year the Center itself was selected for much needed repairs and

rehabilitation, as well as four homes in Bernal Heights.

At the corner of Chavez and Mission, the old auto stereo store and the billboards on top will soon be tumbling down to make way for a 55-unit family development, which will include a child care center and training facility. The official groundbreaking is scheduled for the summer, and we hope all the community will come out for this special event. (See photo page 3)

**What Happens When We Are Old?**

Our Senior program began when the Neighborhood Center's "new" building was dedicated back in 1982. This last decade saw an exciting addition to this critical Center component—the Neighborhood Elder Support Team (NEST), which was launched in 1992. NEST provides a continuum of care for seniors when it becomes more difficult for them to participate in our daily lunch program and activities. It also provides essential case management services and other types of personalized support that allow our older neighbors to live fuller, self-reliant lives. It utilizes the support of a large number of Bernal volunteers, which has led to the component being recognized as a national model for community-based care.

This spring we are publishing an innovative manual on how to develop neighborhood-based support networks for elders. This manual was funded in part by the Administration on Aging and is an excellent resource for anyone interested in setting up a similar program. The manual covers some of the fundamental principles of community-based program development, as well as some of the pitfalls that may arise in the process.

**Fighting For What We Care About**

Bernal has always been a community of

activists. This is reflected in the Center's work as well. From our 1991 city-wide affordable housing campaign to save Market Heights, to our 1992 efforts to keep the Cortland Avenue branch of Bank of America operating, our 1991-1994 campaigns to keep the Bernal library open, our 1995 lobbying against the youth curfew, our 1990-1997 struggles to renovate every park in Bernal, the expansion of the "beat cop" program to Precita and Cortland Avenues—we've been there.

**Community Involvement and Pride**

We have always uniquely worked towards community involvement and pride. At our annual Community Congress local residents vote for our board of directors and set the agenda for the upcoming year. Our annual Fiesta on the Hill and our Holiday Toy Give-Away, both organized since 1989, have allowed Bernal families to celebrate our diversity and the holidays regardless of income or background. And our 35-year-old *New Bernal Journal*, the only community paper delivered door to door in the city, informs neighbors about ongoing activities and efforts in Bernal.

We also cannot forget the 1997 premiere of "BERNALTOWN," co-sponsored by the BHNC, which told Bernal's story of taking on "Dealer Dan," the evil land developer, which in reality was how the BHNC was founded back in 1978.

**The Next Ten Years**

There have been difficult times, like our battle with the Housing Authority over Bernal Dwellings. We must continue to keep the Authority accountable to the neighborhood not only for physical development, but also for what kinds of childcare, youth, and training and jobs programs there will be once the dedication ceremony is over.



Volunteer Faye Farrar and Senior Program Coordinator Roland Soriano at work gathering groceries for biweekly Brown Bag program.

There are other challenges that face Bernal as well, like homelessness within our own community; welfare to work, and what will happen to our neighbors when the federal dollars dry up; the lack of affordable child care throughout our city; three local elementary schools that continue to lag behind others; a living wage desperately needed for every San Franciscan; and more.

Although Bernal is constantly changing, the BHNC must remain vigilant if we are to remain true to our mission statement. We see ourselves as the last fort in the community working to prevent the total gentrification of a diverse community.

We have had great success as a community based organization over the last ten years. Much of this success is due to the involvement of residents and a dedicated board of directors and staff. We expect to continue this success, but only with your involvement as an active community member. Please ask us how to get involved and plan to join us on Saturday, June 26 for our Annual Community Congress. Let's ensure another successful ten years of necessary and important community services and work.

# SALE

at The Good Life Grocery

<p><b>Stonyfield</b> Nonfat Yogurt 8 oz. -reg 99¢ <b>69¢</b></p> <p><b>Nancy's</b> Lowfat Cottage Cheese 16 oz. -reg 1.99 <b>\$1.69</b></p> <p><b>Kozy Shack</b> Puddings all flavors 22 oz. -reg 3.29 <b>\$2.69</b></p> <p><b>BOCA BURGERS</b> Boca Burgers meatless patties 10 oz. -reg 4.19 <b>\$3.49</b></p>	<p><b>Bruce's</b> Banana Bites Plain or Nutty 12 ct -reg 2.89 <b>\$2.29</b></p> <p><b>Ling Ling</b> Potstickers Vegetable or Chicken 15 oz. -reg 4.39 <b>\$3.99</b></p> <p><b>Muir Glen</b> Pasta Sauce all varieties 26 oz. -reg 3.39 <b>\$2.69</b></p> <p><b>R.W. Garcia</b> Tortilla Chips NEW! <b>\$2.99</b></p>	<p><b>Maltagliatti</b> Imported Pastas all cuts &amp; flats 16 oz. -reg 1.29 <b>89¢</b></p> <p><b>V.G. Buck</b> Extra Virgin Olive Oil California grown &amp; pressed 16 oz. -reg 10.99 <b>\$8.99</b></p> <p><b>Casbah</b> Pilafs all varieties <b>\$1.29</b></p> <p><b>Newman's Own</b> Pretzels 8 oz. -reg 1.79 <b>\$1.29</b></p> <p><b>Fig Newmans</b> Lowfat &amp; No Fat 12 oz. -reg 3.39 <b>\$2.69</b></p>
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SOUTH BERNAL—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

at the end of Mrs. D.'s block where it dead ends. Mrs. D. was one of many neighbors who gave plants from their own backyards. She got to know some of the small children and their parents on the block. Last year, Mrs. D. attended the fund-raising dinner for one of these children, now a student at Sala Burton High.

Nine years ago, Mrs. D. wouldn't even answer her doorbell. She only knew one or two people on the street. Today, she goes to neighborhood watch meetings, she's participated in a street tree planting, and she knows her neighbors.

Mrs. D. runs into the high schooler and her 15-year-old brother and their friends every day as she goes to and from the bus stop. In other parts of the city, encountering groups of teenagers scares her. But she knows these kids. She's not afraid because she considers this street her home.

Common areas like the little end-of-the-street garden provide a natural place for people to interact on a frequent basis. They start to feel a connection that goes beyond their own walls. They start to see the street as their street. Once that happens they become willing to organize with their neighbors (whom they now know) and start reclaiming the neighborhood.

*The South Bernal Action Alliance is a non-profit neighborhood organization committed to improving the quality of life in south Bernal Heights. Membership is open to anyone south of Cortland Avenue. For more information, contact Melinda Mazetti at 648-2376. E-mail address is southbernal@yahoo.com. Or attend the next South Bernal Action Alliance meeting on Wednesday, April 7 at 7:30 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room at the Bernal Library.*

## New housing coming to south Bernal

by the South Bernal Action Alliance

There are plans afoot for the two commercial lots at 400 Alemany Boulevard. Pacific Bay Investments will be demolishing the small store on that site, which is between Folsom and Ellsworth and next to the Alemany Housing Development, and building 22 townhouses. There is the potential to harm us or help us in our ongoing battle to make this area a good place to live.


This project will wipe out the only neighborhood amenity Alemany Housing has, but this is a good thing. The small store presently on this site sells mostly liquor, and its parking lot is the headquarters of a gang of drug dealers who used to terrorize Alemany Housing. Last year there were 90 police calls to this site and one murder.

We think it is possible to build this badly needed housing in a way that would strengthen our community. The developer, Adam Sparks, agrees. He is already working with the community and the city to make his development safe and to help make the whole area safer. At the request of the community and the BHNC, he will be giving preference to Bernal residents when his townhouses go on sale, and he will work with his contractors and the BHNC to provide apprenticeships for Bernal youth.

There are also plans in the works for a 50-unit development near the Alemany Farmers' Market and ten to twenty units at the end of the 800 block of Moultrie Street.

We want these developers to work with the community and the city in planning these developments so that their impact is positive. If you are concerned and want to participate, please attend the next South Bernal Action Alliance meeting.

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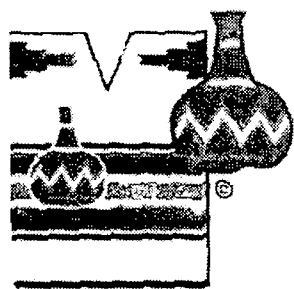


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## LIVE MUSIC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

with gypsy violin and piano on the first Sunday of the month; the Slavonia Traveling Band playing Slavonic folk and gypsy music on the second Sunday; Nelson and Fry, with "gypsy jazz" on acoustic guitar and vocals on the third Sunday; and bluegrass on the last Sunday. Music starts at 6:30 and goes until 9:30-ish.

A few doors down the street is Skip's Tavern (453 Cortland, 285-3456). As their bumper sticker says, "Come on Down for the Best Live Music In Town!" Manager Noelene Souza says, "People come from all over town for our bumper stickers." Jazz, blues and R&B are the musical flavors here. Most nights people can sit in and jam with the performers. Souza says the ages of the musicians range from 21 to 80, with people who have played with the likes of Santana, Junior Parker, the Grateful Dead, and many others.

The musical week starts on Thursdays from 7 to 9 p.m. with the blues and R&B of "King's Night," featuring Albert "King" Giles. Giles, who teaches at Mission High, is a Bernal resident and a Paul Revere Elementary and St. Kevin's alumnus. Fridays from 9:30 p.m. to 1:30 a.m. has "Fog City" on April 2 and 3, "R&B Funk with Edna Love" on April 9 and 10, "The Big Ray Blues Band" on April 16 and 17, "Spoon Full of Blues" on April

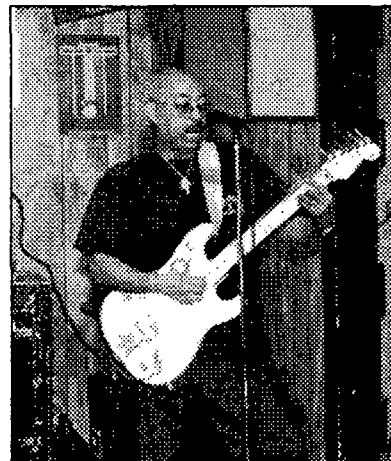
23 and 24, and "MacGregor et al" on April 30.

Also coming to Cortland is the Music on the Hill 1999 concert season. Classical chamber music concerts will be happening on four Sunday nights between April and November in the intimate setting of St. Kevin's Church at 704 Cortland.

The first concert on April 25 will be "Musick's Muse," a lively evening of Early Music from 17th Century England with works by Henry Purcell, John Blow, Tobias Hume, Bach, and Handel. The performers are Sally Munro, mezzo-soprano; Michael Kull, tenor; Douglas Kelly, viola da gamba; and Katherine Heater, harpsichord.

June 6 brings Joan, Ava & Friends. Joan Jeanrenaud, cello (of the Kronos Quartet), and Ava Soifer, piano, will be joined by friends in a recital featuring a premiere of a commissioned work by Bay Area composer and jazz musician, Wayne Wallace. The new work will be for cello, piano, and percussion in the Cuban Danzon style. Also on the program are Schubert's Trout Quintet and works by Britten and Lutoslawski.

On September 12 the Pacific Arts Trio with Angie Koregelos, flute; Dan Reiter, cello; and Natalie Cox, harp, will perform transcriptions by cellist Dan Reiter of works by Janacek, Debussy, and Britten.



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"King's Night"—Albert Giles plays blues at Skip's Bar on Thursday nights.



Michael Tull, Katherine Heater, and Sally Munro play music of 17th century England at St. Kevin's, April 25.

And finally, on November 14, the Del Sol String Quartet with Anthony Blea, violin; Kathryn Stenberg, violin; Charlton Lee, viola; and Gretchen Egen, cello, will perform works by Beethoven, Dvorak, D'Rivera, and Piazzolla.

For information, call 241-1515 or e-mail mothmuse@aol.com.

## Art Calendar

• "Art and Music for the New Millennium." "The Opposites" — art of Jana Hutcheson. At the Grace Cathedral Courtyard Gallery until April 18. Gallery hours Sunday, 12:30-4 p.m. Also music by Jana and friends, April 16, 8 p.m. at Sacred Grounds, 2095 Hayes St. For info call 647-7517.

• "Havana Panorama" — photography by Bernal resident Rick Gerhar of Cuba. At Bernal Books, 401 Cortland Ave. until May 31.

• Open Dance Studios, daily April 24-May 2. Part of "Bay Area Celebrates National Dance Week." Public classes, workshops, and working rehearsals at assorted venues throughout the Bay Area. For info call 835-3100.

• Community Music Center presents 14 concerts in April and May, including Dawn Upshaw. Concert with Conversation on Fri., Apr. 9 and the San Francisco Children's Chorus with operetta premiere, "Back to Another time" on Sun., May 23, 544 Capp St. For info call 647-6015.

## Noe Valley acting classes

Jessica Sage wants to share her passion for acting with Bernal Heights residents. She will be teaching Acting for Beginners, an eight-week course, starting May 10.

"People are telling me all the time that they'd love to act," says Jessica, "but they just feel too scared. My aim is to create a safe, supportive environment."

Jessica has been teaching acting for the last five years and has been a professional actor for 15 years.

For more information, call ACT 1 at 824-ACT1.



LARISSA LICEA

Josephine Morada and students work out at the Neighborhood Center in preparation for the 1999 Carnaval San Francisco

## Time to get ready for Carnaval— Escola Nova offers samba classes in Bernal Heights

On Sunday, May 30, the sweats and athletic shoes will be traded in for sequins and feathers. That is when Escola Nova takes to the streets for the 15th annual Carnaval San Francisco parade. Escola Nova's theme this year is "Homage to Iansa," the AfroBrazilian goddess of the winds and storms.

The dancers and "bateria" (percussion ensemble) that make up Escola Nova are practicing at the BHNC on Thursday nights, 7:30 to 9 during April and May, led by director, choreographer and co-founder Josephine Morada and bateria director Rudy Ortiz.

Veteran members of the group are enthusiastic about the upcoming parade. "It's the most outrageously fun thing to do—I live for this," said three-year veteran Carolyn Ayres. "I've been doing this since the beginning," said bateria member Rick Telesforo. "We are the oldest samba group in the Bay Area." He demonstrates his instrument, the cuica, a distinctive sounding friction drum that originated in Africa.

Classes are free to children and teens 18 and under. Children are welcome and encouraged to participate. For information on classes, fees, and costumes, call 661-4798.

# Writers' "Potato Bash" a mashing success

by Thayer Walker

Word-lovers, writing teachers, and a plethora of potatoes rubbed elbows last month at a lively Open House & Potato Bash hosted by the Writing Salon, a small school of creative writing that opened its doors to the Bernal Heights neighborhood last January.

Launched by Moultrie Street resident and writer Jane Underwood, the Salon offers four yearly sessions of 10-week evening courses and one-day Saturday workshops featuring a variety of fiction, poetry and creative nonfiction classes.

Underwood, a former newspaper features editor with a masters degree in creative writing, says her love of learning, teaching, and writing was the driving force behind the startup of the Salon. That, she says, and "a stubborn, seemingly genetic need to be my own boss!"

The potato theme stemmed from an in-class writing exercise that Underwood once used when teaching her personal essays class. "My students blew me away the first time I had them do the potato exercise," says Underwood. "They blew themselves away!" As a result, she notes, potatoes have become a staple in her writing classes—and thus seemed an apt theme for the Open House.

The potato bash also inspired several entries to a Potato Writing contest. The winner will receive a free 10-week class in the Writing Salon's Spring Session, which runs from April 17 to June 28.



©Beverly Tharp 1999

Potatoes took center stage at Writing Salon's Open House and Potato Bash.

All the Writing Salon classes, which are taught by a staff of several professional writers, meet in the cozy downstairs level of Underwood's home on Moultrie Street. During the Open House, the two Writing Salon rooms overflowed not only with big bowls of potato chips and vats of potato salad, but with the animated chatter and creative energy of 50 writers and would-be writers who attended the spudly event.

The Writing Salon's 10-week classes, which meet Monday through Thursday evenings from 7 to 9:30, range from basic craft and creative process to short story, poetry, screenwriting, and freelance magazine writing. One-day workshops include song lyric writing, children's book writing, book proposals, erotica, travel writing, and more.

Formats for each class vary according to the teacher, says Underwood, but most offer a combination of information, in-class writing, and group sharing and feedback on writing assignments done both in and out of class. In Underwood's personal essays class, students also "partner" with each other outside of class, sharing daily writings and often establishing connections that continue well beyond the classroom.

"That's another thing we try to encourage," notes Underwood. "Writers connecting with other writers, and breaking out of the all-too-common isolation that so many of us have experienced."

For more information about the Writing Salon, call (415) 642-9793 or visit their web site: [www.writingsalons.com](http://www.writingsalons.com).

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Michael Golojuch at 206-2140 ext. 148.

## Wanted: Volunteers to deliver the New Bernal Journal

Have 30 to 60 minutes to spare every other month? Help keep Bernal Heights informed—deliver the New Bernal Journal door-to-door.

Many streets in Bernal Heights need deliverers We also need captains to help coordinate distribution. We need you!

If you can help, please call Mauricio at 206-2140 ext 154.

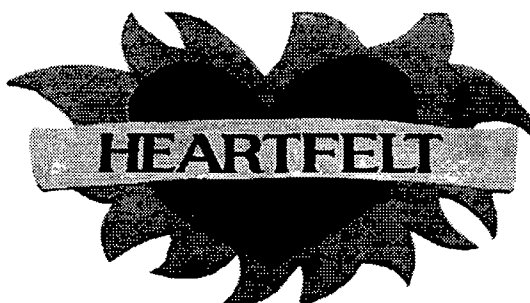
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## Youth leadership in action at the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center

by Jeannie Huang,  
BHNC Youth Services Director

Youth participants of Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center (BHNC) have been using their skills and experiences to take leadership roles in their schools and communities. In January a group of youth successfully developed a "Healthy Neighborhood" program and received funding from the Youth Leadership Institute to implement the program at the GMC (Greater Mission Consortium) office. With this funding, youth will take on the responsibility of outreach and recruitment of other youth in the Outer Mission and Excelsior neighborhoods to participate in GMC and BHNC programs. In addition, funding was given to purchase much needed equipment and supplies for the GMC Office such as reference guides, computer supplies and art supplies.

The youth have also been very active at City Hall. They participated at both "Speak Up for Kids Day" on February 19 and the youth budget hearings. Our youth had personal visits with nine of eleven members of the Board of Supervisors and advocated for continued support and funding for the GMC



Youth members of BHNC's United Playaz Club at the leadership retreat.

program and school facilities improvement. As one of the very few groups of youth participating at the City Hall events, our youth left a very positive impression with the legislative officials, many of whom committed to continued support of BHNC programs.

In late February, the group of youth participated in a leadership retreat where they developed a plan and timeline for a neighborhood clean-up in the Excelsior The

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

## BHNC's free classes and activities for seniors

In an effort to enrich the lives of seniors living in the Bernal Heights area, the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center offers a variety of classes and programs Monday through Friday. Volunteers from the community donate their time and energy each week to provide activities ranging from dance lessons to health and nutrition presentations.

The following weekly activities are open to all seniors and are free of charge.

- Tuesdays—Free blood pressure checks by volunteer Helen Jacques. 10 to 11:30 a.m.
- Wednesdays—Discussion Group led by Shawn Chaves. 10:30 a.m. The group brings a personal touch to today's pressing issues and concerns. In existence for two years, the group has continued to grow while maintaining regular attendees.
- Thursdays—Dance Class led by Nancy Diselman. 11 a.m. Great for seniors who are looking for a fun way to get a light cardiovascular workout or just want to learn a few new dance steps. For almost a year, Nancy has been helping seniors get exercise and have fun doing it. Students have come to ap-

preciate Nancy's enthusiastic spirit and look forward to her classes.

- Fridays—Yoga Class led by Geraldine Gyger. 9:30 a.m. This is a newer class just added to the Bernal Heights program. Geraldine, who is also a licensed masseuse, is interested in helping seniors target their problem areas while giving them stretching exercises they can also do at home.
- Fridays—Health and Nutrition Presentation by Jo Ellen Brothers. 10:30 a.m. Jo Ellen, who is on staff at City College of San Francisco, helps seniors learn more about their bodies and nutrition. She gives weekly health advice and leads chair exercises.
- Friday—Free blood pressure and glucose checks by nurse Linda Feagles.

The Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center is always looking for new ideas for classes or programs that can be offered to the senior population. If you would like more information on any of the classes mentioned above, call BHNC Senior Services at 206-2142. If you are interested in leading an activity or class as a volunteer, phone Lisa Coffey, Volunteer Coordinator at 206-9177.

## Reality check: Youth Gets Up Close and Personal on Life Behind the Bars

by Jonathan Tayo

[Early on two Saturday mornings, February 13 and 20, the Gang Prevention Counselors of the BHNC Youth Department took a busload of teenage boys aged 13 to 17 on an unforgettable journey. The trip, sponsored by the Squires Program, introduced teens to the very raw and real world of San Quentin State Penitentiary. The program is designed to teach youth about the real consequences of crimes that these youth or their peers might be at risk of committing.

All groups are taken inside the prison gates and led by volunteer "Tour Guides," prisoners who are serving life sentences for the crimes they committed. Jonathan Tayo, a 15-year-old sophomore at Balboa High School, recalls what he observed and experienced as a youth participant.]

I went to San Quentin and it was really scary because there are a lot of prisoners that

look scary. The first Saturday we went to a room and told the things we did on the street. They asked a lot of questions about our attitudes and they were shouting at us. In our group there was a kid who thought he was pretty cool. He talked back to one of the prisoners who was lecturing us. The prisoner got really mad and made him do some work. After the lectures and presentations, we ate some prison food for lunch. It was really nasty. They only gave us three pieces of bread.

The following Saturday we went back to continue the tour of San Quentin. This time, we went into the back yard where all prisoner work out or play basketball. The tour guides made us walk along the side wall where all of the prisoners could see us. I was really scared because all of the prisoners kept laughing and pointing at us. They kept

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



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# 1999



## NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER SURVEY

Dear Neighbors:

As the new Executive Director of the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center, I'm excited to lead our community center into the next millennium. As we enter into our next twenty years of organizing and serving the community, I invite all residents— children, youth, seniors, families, clients, and families of clients — to actively get involved and participate in the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center's programs and activities. With families and working people getting priced out of the community, it is increasingly difficult to maintain what we have built over the last twenty years with community participation.

The Board of Directors and staff of BHNC have embarked on a strategic planning process for the next three years. We are currently in the information gathering process and we need your input. I would like to extend to each and every one of you the opportunity to raise "a voice" in the future of the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center. Please complete the enclosed survey and return it to the Neighborhood Center or to one of our Bernal merchant partners listed on the survey by April 19th, 1999.

We also will be hosting six focus groups during the month of April including one for youth and one for seniors. Please let us know if you would like to participate in one of our focus groups.

Initial results of the survey and focus groups will be distributed and discussed at our annual Bernal Heights Community Congress scheduled for Saturday, June 26th from 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM.

Finally, don't forget to renew or become a member of one of the most active neighborhood centers in the City. Support our "Stand Up For Bernal Heights" campaign. Our membership is affordable, effective, and strengthens our voice as one community.

Thank you in advance for your interest, time, and support.

Sincerely,

*Mauricio E. Vela*

Mauricio E. Vela  
BHNC Executive Director

# STAND UP FOR BERNAL HEIGHTS! SEE PAGE 9 FOR ALL THE DETAILS...

**BERNAL HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER  
Planning Survey**

Please participate in defining our future – your feedback means a lot to us! The Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center is in the process of doing planning regarding how best to meet the needs of our community now and for the future. This questionnaire asks you about your experience with various BHNC activities and services, and how important these services and activities are to you personally. We hope to better understand how much you know about us, how satisfied you are with our activities and services, and if you have any recommendations about how we might better serve you.

Please complete this survey and return **no later than April 19<sup>th</sup>**.  
Return your survey to the following locations: *Progressive Grounds (get 50 cents off a purchase) – 400 Cortland Avenue; Pizza Express (get 50 cents off a purchase) – 919 Cortland Avenue; BHNC – 515 Cortland Avenue; or Bernal Public Library – 500 Cortland Avenue.*

1. How long have you lived in the neighborhood? \_\_\_\_ years \_\_\_\_ number in household  
What street do you live on? \_\_\_\_\_

*optional:* Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
Local church you attend and/or school your children attend: : \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are you a current member of Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center?  
☐ Yes  
☐ No  
☐ Was a member but not at present time

3. If you *are* a member, why do you support the Center? (check all that apply, and list order of importance, i.e., #1, #2, #3, etc.)

<input type="checkbox"/> I like that BHNC offers services to youth and seniors	Order of Priority
<input type="checkbox"/> I want to support BHNC affordable housing efforts	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Friend asked me to join	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> I support activities such as Fiesta/ Street Fair, Community Congress, Toy-Give-Away	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Community Organizing (saving the Bank of America branch and library on Cortland, etc.)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	_____

4. Why do you live in Bernal Heights? What do you like About the Neighborhood?  
(check top three reasons only)

<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable housing	<input type="checkbox"/> A safe place for kids and adults
<input type="checkbox"/> Convenience to where I work	<input type="checkbox"/> Has a sense of community pride
<input type="checkbox"/> Diversity of residents	<input type="checkbox"/> Can walk to shopping
<input type="checkbox"/> Abundance of city services	<input type="checkbox"/> Friendly neighbors/people take care of each other
<input type="checkbox"/> Pet friendly	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

5. How important do you think the BHNC is to this community? Why?

☐ Very important  
☐ Important  
☐ Fairly Important  
☐ Not important

Overall, how well do you think the BHNC is doing in meeting the needs of the community:

☐ Excellent  
☐ Good  
☐ Fair  
☐ Poor  
☐ Don't know/ no opinion

Comments to above ratings:

6. What do you think are the top issues/challenges facing Bernal Heights: Changes or problems in the neighborhood that concern you?

(PLEASE CHECK ONLY THREE TOP ISSUES)	CHECK ALL THAT APPLY
<input type="checkbox"/> Affordable Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Services for youth: employment	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Services for youth: gang prevention services	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Services to seniors: supportive services to homebound seniors	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Services for seniors: lunch at community center and other activities	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Maintaining adequacy of city services	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Gentrification/families priced out of the community	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Availability of basic shopping needs	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Public transportation to this area	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Health care	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Employment training/unemployment/jobs	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Schools	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Immigration rights/naturalization	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Safety/crime prevention	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue
<input type="checkbox"/> Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> I would like to work on this issue

7. A) Have you or a family member participated in this activity or used this service?  
B) How *important* is it to you personally that BHNC continue to provide the following *current* services and activities? (check all that apply)  
C) What do you think are the most important things that we do?

A: Participated In?

B: How Important

C: Top 3

Service or Activity	Check if you or a family member have participated in this activity or have used this service	VERY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	NOT IMPORTANT	NO OPINION	PLEASE STAR * the three most important services and activities that you think we do
Affordable rental housing development						
Acquisition of affordable housing for special needs						
Low interest rehab loans for low income owners						
Youth employment preparation & placement						
After school support/gang prevention services						
School based counseling/ youth development services						
Emergency meals for frail elders						
Senior injury prevention/in-home safety program						
Social services and case management for seniors						
Community Congress/ membership drive						
Fiesta - Street Fair						
New Bernal Journal publication & distribution						
Public safety organizing						
Coordinating and placing volunteers and other resources in community based programs						
Speaking before public agencies to advocate on behalf of Bernal Heights Neighborhood						
Lead hazard education and outreach						

Please use this space if you wish to explain any of the ratings above:

8. Please rate the overall *quality* of the following *current* BHNC services and activities, and record your recommended *future* level of activity or service if resources were available

quality of current BHNC services and activities						future level of activity of service		
Service or Activity	EXCELLENT	GOOD	FAIR	POOR	NO OPINION	Consider Expanding	Maintain at Existing Level	Consider Reducing
Affordable rental housing development								
Acquisition of affordable housing for special needs								
Low interest rehab loans for low income owners								
Youth employment preparation & placement								
After school support/gang prevention services								
School based counseling/ youth development services								
Emergency meals for frail elders								
Senior injury prevention/in-home safety program								
Social services and case management for seniors								
Community Congress/ membership drive								
Fiesta - Street Fair								
New Bernal Journal publication and distribution								
Public safety organizing								
Coordinating and placing volunteers and other resources in community based programs								
Speaking before public agencies to advocate on behalf of Bernal Heights Neighborhood								
Lead hazard education and outreach								

9. What additional activities or services should BHNC consider developing for the future, if appropriate resources were available?

Service or Activity	Consider Offering	I am willing and interested in participating

10. Comments and/or recommendations regarding the above ratings. Anything else you would like to tell us that would help us better be able to serve you as a member of the community or make you more likely to participate activity in BHNC?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.



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MORE INFORMATION**

**SOLO POR RECICLAR 10% MAS,  
PROGRAMAS PARA NINOS EN SU  
COMUNIDAD RECIBIRAN \$10,000  
PARA PROGRAMAS EDUCATIVOS DEL  
MEDIO AMBIANTE.  
(DE HOY HASTA JUNIO 30)  
LLAME AL 554-RECYCLE PARE MAS  
INFORMACION.**

# Stand Up for Bernal Heights

## What Fifteen Dollars Can Do

Fifteen dollars doesn't go as far as it used to. Maybe you can squeeze dinner for three at McDonald's on that. Or see the latest John Travolta film with a friend. It might even pay for a small bag of groceries (if you clip coupons). Not far at all...

At the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center, fifteen dollars—the dues for an individual membership—still “buys” quite a lot. As long-time Members and Friends already know, dues and contributions are the backbone to the Center's efforts to:

- Reach out to frail and elder neighbors as well as our young people.
- Build affordable housing.
- Organize community action campaigns.
- Produce and organize Fiesta on the Hill.
- And much more!

## Join a Force of Residents

Membership also “buys” a voice in the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center.

Now, the fact is, if you live in Bernal Heights you already possess the most important voice of all. As a neighbor, you are invited to attend board meetings, serve on committees, and participate in our annual Bernal Heights Community Congress, a half-day caucus at which local issues are discussed and prioritized. This year, residents are also invited to participate in the Center's strategic planning process that was kicked-off on March 8 and which will be on-going through September.

But when you join as a Member or a Friend of the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center, your voice grows so much stronger. Each year at Congress, resident-Members **cast a vote** for new board members and any proposed changes to by-laws. Even more important, you **join a force of residents** who empower the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center to advocate for our neighborhood's interests.

## Stand Up For the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center

That is why your participation as a Member is so critical. It is not just dollars raised to cover costs, but also the count of people who stand up for the Center's work. Those same numbers help leverage additional support from foundations, corporations, and government agencies—all for the benefit of Bernal Heights.

Our target for the 1999 calendar year is to sign up 500 Members and Friends who stand up for the work of the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center. Whether you participate with \$15, \$25, \$100, \$5 or any amount you can, we hope we can COUNT ON YOU to join the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center today. (Also, don't forget United Way giving—agency number 53288.)

If you have any questions or would like to become involved with this year's Membership Drive or Friends Campaign, contact Shella Brenner, Director of Development, at 206-2140 ext. 161.

## More Reasons to Join

### Member Benefits

- Voting privileges at Congress (for Bernal Heights residents only)
- A 10% discount on all BHNC room rentals
- Acknowledgment in BHNC Annual Report

### Friends Benefits (all of the above plus)

- Annual Friends reception
- Recognition in December *New Bernal Journal*

### Early Bird Appreciation

Join or renew your membership with BHNC (at any level) by May 24, 1999 and we'll thank you with:

- a 10% discount coupon to Gifts on the Hill, the eclectic vintage store located at 515 Cortland Avenue that benefits BHNC's Senior Services
- A special early-bird acknowledgment in the June 1999 issue of the *New Bernal Journal*.

## I am standing up for the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center.

A check is enclosed for the following dues and/or contribution:

### Members (\$1-\$50)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1 Youth                               | <input type="checkbox"/> \$5 Senior/Low-Income  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Individual                         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Non-profit Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Family (___ adults & ___ children) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Businesses        |

### I WANT TO HELP EVEN MORE.

A contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is added to the above dues.

### Supporters (\$50-\$99)

- If a family: \_\_\_ adults & \_\_\_ children
- |                               |                               |                                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

### Friends (\$100 and up)

- If a family: \_\_\_ adults & \_\_\_ children
- |   |  |                                   |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Friend   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Sustainer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Advocate | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Sponsor |                                   |

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street \_\_\_\_\_ Apt. \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

How has the BHNC made a difference to you?

Why did you decide to become a Member/Friend today?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! Please clip and send to: BHNC, Development Office, 515 Cortland Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94110. Make your check payable to the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center. Your cancelled check and our letter of acknowledgement will serve as a receipt. THE FULL AMOUNT OF YOUR DUES AND ADDED CONTRIBUTION IS TAX DEDUCTIBLE.

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The New Bernal Journal is available at the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center during open hours, Mon.-Fri., and also at the Bernal Branch Library, Bernal Beast, the Good Life Store, and other neighborhood businesses.

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# Healing Alternatives

## The Chakras, continued

by Jana Hutcheson

The "Healing Alternatives" article in the December/January issue of the NBJ started our discussion of the chakras, the large vortex centers of energy in the body. This article will continue with the third and fourth chakras.

The body can be seen as a collection of energy vortices held together by the personality. The chakras, sometimes called wheels, are considered to be seven in number in most healing systems. They open and close quickly like camera lenses, depending on what energy is needed at the moment.

Each chakra is known to respond to particular sounds and colors. Generally, the lower vibrations stimulate the lower chakras and the higher sounds stimulate higher chakras. It is fun to try different drum sounds, gongs, cymbal, or musical instruments to try to feel which areas in the body vibrate the most.

The third chakra deals with power in the body and circulation of energy in the body. It is two fingers above the naval and is also associated with how much a person is really able to inhabit their body as an energy system. Its healing color is usually orange. Martial arts such as Karate, Tai Chi Chuan, and Aikido concentrate on this area, located in the solar plexus, as a source of power. It is said that our culture in general is moving from a power-based, third chakra to a heart-centered, fourth chakra culture. How long this will take is unknown.

The fourth chakra is the heart chakra. Ideas about love and self-sacrifice or acceptance and appreciation are stored here. Like-

wise, memories of hurt, invalidation, and abuse are stored here, too. In bodywork this type of memory is around the collarbone, sternum, and upper chest. Its healing colors are usually pink and green. In bodywork, if an area is particularly stressed, it can be pacified and relaxed by sound, color, or herbology. Likewise, if it is sluggish, it can be stimulated and areas of stagnation can be urged to move and change.

Frequently, work on the physical plane can affect the emotional state and vice versa. Some healers insist that healing must be done on the energy body first before the physical body. These theories are not hard science to be proved or disproved. These are adjuncts to Western healing arts. Sometimes an attitude of play, open-mindedness, and experimentation is appropriate. One has to be willing to intuitively imagine and guess. Energy follows thought and one's observation, active thinking, and imagination can often be what create change on the psychic or physical plane.

**Healing herbal tip:** Astragalus is a tonic herb which works to bolster the immune system. It is known to increase the population and activity of infection-fighting white blood cells and boost the production of interferon, the body's natural antiviral agent. It used to be used only in China but is now grown and used widely in the U.S. as well. It has been shown to decrease the incidence of colds and flu. Usually used in winter, its root can be added to soups and stews.

*Jana Hutcheson is a Certified Massage Therapist practicing in Bernal Heights.*



The Golden Gate National Recreation Area includes Muir Woods (shown here), the Marin Headlands, Stinson Beach, Alcatraz, Fort Mason, Land's End, Ocean Beach, and much more.

## National Park Service reaches out to Latino and other communities of color

by Melissa Aguilar

As a Latina Park Service employee, I want to tell you about a conference that the Golden Gate National Recreation Area hosted last month in San Francisco that bridged my community and my profession. It was "America's Parks—America's People; A Mosaic in Motion," the first national conference to focus on race and diversity in America's National Parks. The conference, which took place at Fort Mason January 13 to 16, brought together park staff with an array of diverse organizations to implement strategies to break down barriers and build new partnerships between the parks and neighboring communities.

I was glad to see representatives of various diverse organizations, but most of all, proud to see important Hispanic leaders including Maria Montoya, professor from the University of Michigan; Roger Rivera, president, National Hispanic Environmental Council; Christina Valdez, director, Cross Cultural Environmental Leadership; and others. The speakers shared their own experiences and challenges that they encountered in their lives and careers. Based on their experiences, they also related to us ways to break down barriers of race in our communities and work places.

Conference workshops and panel discus-

sions included "National Park Organizations and Minority Communities: Can More Be Done?," "Urban Youth Workshop," "Angel Island Immigration Station," and many others. The workshop I attended was "People Organized to Defend Environmental Rights in the Mission District." This multicultural organization is educating their neighborhood about environmental problems and how to find solutions to these local problems. As an example, the workshop described the dangers of hazardous materials and contamination. The Mission Anti-Pollution Action Project (Proyecto Mapa) is currently focused on a vacant lot on Treat Street that has been contaminated with toxins for the past several years. Their plan is to create a park for the kids.

The National Park Service encourages communities of color to learn about available resources, sites to visit, and volunteer opportunities. Organizations and communities are always welcome to express ideas, experience different opportunities, be exposed to new environments, and learn the beauty of nature at Golden Gate National Recreation Area—our local national park.

*Melissa Aguilar works in the public affairs office of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. For more information, you can contact her at 561-4630.*

### Health Calendar

- **Free Community Lectures** at St. Luke's Hospital: Nose Woes/Allergies, Sat., Apr. 17, 10:30–noon; Getting Ready for Surgery, Sat., Apr. 24, 1:30–3 p.m.; Skin Care for the Future, Sat. May 1, 10:30–noon. 3555 Cesar Chavez St. Call 641-6465 to register.
- **First Annual Health and Fitness Fair** at the San Francisco Zoo. Wed., April 7 (Zoo's monthly Free Day), 11 a.m.–3 p.m. One Zoo

Road. For info, call 753-7080.

- **Alzheimer's Association Support Groups.** Tues., Apr. 20 and May 18, 5:30–7 p.m. St. Francis Memorial Hospital, 900 Hyde St. For info call 584-1079.

- **University of California San Francisco** free talks, including "Better Vision Now," Mon. Apr. 5 and "The Many Faces of Lupus," Wed. Apr. 14. Various locations. For info call 476-4394.



## Breastfeeding Center

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## Recycling—News for the neighborhood

by David Assmann  
Recycling and Hazardous  
Waste Program Manager  
San Francisco Recycling Program

With Earth Day right around the corner, it seems appropriate to look at new ways to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Fortunately, there are a number of ways to expand your efforts to preserve the environment this month.

Residents of Bernal Heights now have a new recycling option—used motor oil and oil filters. The motor oil should be put into a secure plastic container (with a screw top lid) and placed at the curb on your regular recycling day. Oil filters should be drained into a pan overnight, placed in a sealed, leak-proof plastic bag and set out next to your other recyclables. Used oil and oil filters will be picked up at a separate time than your other recyclables. You can recycle up to five gallons of oil per week. If you need more information on the curbside oil recycling program, call 800-449-7587.

Residents of Bayview/Hunter's Point, Bernal Heights, the Mission, Portola, Potrero Hill and Visitacion Valley also have the opportunity to help neighborhood youth this spring by participating in the Spring Recycling Challenge and recycling more paper, bottles and cans. The San Francisco Recycling Program will give \$10,000 to summer youth programs in these neighborhoods if recycling goes up by 10% during the months of April, May and June.

The recycling program will be measuring the recyclables collected through the curbside and apartment recycling programs during the Spring Recycling Challenge. Items that can be recycled in curbside and apartment recycling programs include junk mail, cardboard boxes, office paper, newspapers, cereal and other dry food boxes, phone books, magazines and catalogs, paper bags, tin/steel cans, aluminum cans and foil, empty aerosol and paint cans, glass jars and bottles, and #1 and #2 plastic bottles.

One of the Recycling Program's goals for 1999 is to increase the recycling of organic materials like food and yard waste, which are now the single largest component of what we send to the landfill. Fortunately, much of this material can be recycled through composting by using either an in-

door or outdoor compost bin.

If you have a yard and a place for a compost bin, all you need to do is place compostable materials (such as sawdust, lawn clippings, small twigs and branches, and food wastes such as leftovers from salad preparations, egg shells, vegetable peels, and coffee grounds) in the bin, and within a few months you'll have compost that can be added to your garden and container plants.

By making your own compost, you won't have to spend money on fertilizers. Compost increases soil fertility, making your plants healthier. In times of drought, compost also helps retain soil moisture, lowering your watering needs.

If you don't have a yard, you can still compost your food scraps in an indoor worm bin. So how to start composting? You can start by attending a free workshop. The San Francisco Recycling Program sponsors a series of workshops on composting, conducted by the San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG). The first, on Saturday, April 3 from 10 a.m. to noon, is an Urban Composting and Family Gardening Day event in Alioto Park, 20th Street near Capp. The second is in Bayview/Hunter's Point at Candlestick Point Garden at 1105 Carroll, from 10 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 17. This workshop will focus on the perils of lead in the soil and how you can use compost to create a healthy garden.

If you already know you want to start composting and you're looking for a high quality, low-cost compost bin, the San Francisco Recycling Program is offering two bins to San Francisco residents at a savings of up to 75%. For \$19.50 you can purchase a \$90 Earth Machine compost bin at a one-day compost bin sale on Saturday, April 10 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Everett Middle School, 450 Church Street (at 17th). You can also purchase a Wiggly Wranch worm bin for only \$24.50. For more information on composting, call SLUG at 285-7585.

Finally, the SuperRecycler program is now going to be more convenient. As of March 1, your bulky items for recycling will be picked up by appointment. The program is for items that don't fit into your garbage can. Appliances, scrap metal, clean wood, and yard trimmings will be recycled through this program. Call Sunset Scavenger at 330-1300 to schedule an appointment.

## Grant for lead-based paint removal announced

Representative Nancy Pelosi (Dem.-CA) announced on February 4 that the City and County of San Francisco will receive a \$3 million Department of Housing and Urban Development grant for the removal of lead-based paint in targeted neighborhoods. The grant program is designed to support local efforts to remove lead-based paint hazards from housing, encourage the development of an action plan to prevent childhood lead poisoning, and develop ways to maintain lead education activities beyond the life of the grant.

This grant will target 500 privately owned, low-income homes built prior to 1978 in the Mission District and other areas. About 75 percent of houses and apartments

built before 1978 in the United States contain lead paint.

In addition, Consumer Action will receive \$60,000 under the Local Lead Hazard Awareness Campaign Grant Program. The program will support efforts to increase awareness of lead poisoning in communities of color. Lead poisoning is one of the most common environmental child health problems in the United States and is especially harmful to children younger than six. Lead poisoning affects three to four million young children, about one in six under the age of six.

For more information, call Raphael Hawley, BHNC Housing Program at 206-2140 ext. 150.

### Events Calendar

- **Information fair** for business owners and managers. Workshops, demonstrations, info on clean streets, safety, parking, hazardous waste and more. Entertainment and kids' activities. Sat. Apr. 17, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Cesar Chavez School, 825 Shotwell. For info call 554-3404.
- **San Francisco League of Urban Gardeners (SLUG) events**—Earthday Celebration at the new Bayview Opera House/Joseph Lee Garden and Compost Education Center.

Tours, music, more. 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Corner of Oakdale and Third Streets. Also, Celebration/Workday Event at the Alice Griffith "Double Rock" Community Garden. Help build the new compost education center. Picnic potluck to follow. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Alice Griffith Community Housing Project, off Third St. and Fitzgerald. For info call 285-7584.

• **At the Bernal Heights Library:** Scrabble Nights. Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Spanish Conversation. Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. 500 Cortland Ave. For info call 695-5160.

## Save \$90 each year on your water & sewer bill



Own a single-family or a multifamily building with fifteen units or less in San Francisco? Then you can buy one or more water-efficient toilets from the San Francisco Water Dept. for

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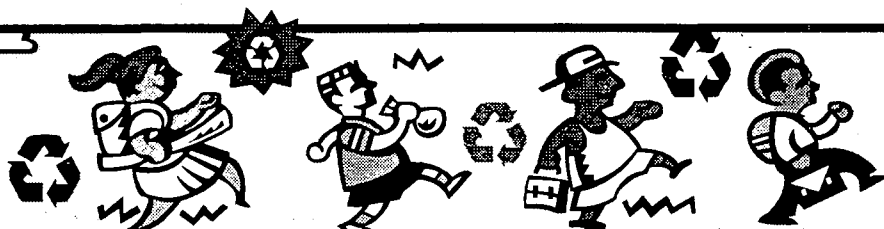
**Saturday, April 17, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.**

**John O'Connell H.S., 41st Ave. & Ortega**

Supplies are limited. Those without preapprovals will be served on a first come, first serve basis.

**Contact SFWD at 923-2571.**

## Recycle 10% More! And Raise \$10,000 for Neighborhood Summer Environmental Programs for Kids



Just by recycling 10% more, programs for kids in your neighborhood will receive \$10,000 for summer environmental programs. **Kids Count!** So, accept the challenge and recycle more! Now through June 30.

**San Francisco  
RECYCLING  
PROGRAM**

**Call 554-RECYcle for more information**

Participating Neighborhoods: Bayview/Hunters Point, Bernal Heights, Mission, Portola, Potrero Hill, & Visitacion Valley

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REALITY CHECK CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

teasing us about what would happen to us if we were really locked in prison with them.

After that we went into a "one cell" where each of us was locked inside for half an hour just so that we could feel what it was really like inside there. It was really boring because you had nothing to do in there even for just 30 minutes. Then the guides lectured us and told us how they feel when they're inside the cells. When we came out of the cells the prisoners kept making noises and kept telling us that they better not see us back here.

We were then taken to the South Block Building where they showed us their shower facilities; it was disgusting. They also told us some true horror stories that happen in the showers, and that was really scary. We went back inside a classroom and listened to lectures again. At that time, one of my friends got in big trouble by one of prisoners because my friend kept interrupting the prisoner while the prisoner was talking seriously.

The trip really opened my eyes and I'm glad that Rudy [Corpus, BHNC Gang Prevention Counselor] took me and my friends on this trip. I think it helped all of us think about what it would be like if any of us were sent to San Quentin for real. The trip was one of the most horrifying experiences in my whole life, but I learned a lot.



Proud students from Paul Revere Elementary hold their Certificates of Participation after their assembly presentation. Also shown are coordinators Starlette Jones, front row left, and back row from left, Dorothy Chisholm, parent Mary Armstrong, and Victoria Wilson.

## Paul Revere students' special program

On Saturday, February 27, students from Paul Revere Elementary School participated in the Bernal Heights Neighborhood Center Senior Program's African American celebration. Their program included a tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and the recitation of an original poem dedicated to poet Langston Hughes. The students also recognized African American inventors and gave background information about the inventions.

The program, designed to be educational as well as entertaining, was coordinated by Elementary Advisor Starlette Jones, Parent Liaison Victoria Wilson and Primary Intervention Program (PIP) Special Friend Dorothy Chisholm. The students also presented their program in an assembly at their school. The staff and parents of these Paul Revere students are extremely proud of them for participating in this event.

## Leonard R. Flynn School: Building a school community

by Liz Weld Noland,  
Leonard R. Flynn Elementary School  
Librarian

The Leonard R. Flynn School turns a newly vibrant face to Bernal Hill and Precita Park. Thanks to Precita Eyes Mural Arts Center, the refurbished mural on the school's south side glows with fresh color and definition, inspiring the school inside.

The children of Flynn School arrive daily from different neighborhoods, cultures, languages, and family styles. "Our job is to create a school community for our children, with high expectations and shared vocabulary," says Gladys L. Frantz, principal.

To create a school culture, the school uses a concept drawn from the city-wide IRIS program to reinforce positive behavior. At daily courtyard opening ceremonies, the school embraces one of the seven

"Virtues of Maat,"—truth, justice, reciprocity, balance, harmony, order, or propriety—to work on during the day.

For academic vocabulary, the faculty uses the Big6™ Skills Approach for classrooms, a problem-solving strategy to help students organize tasks and find and use information. With the help of a grant from the San Francisco Education Fund, the school will hold a science fair on May 7. Classes will exhibit projects prepared using Big6™. Most of the money will be spent on new science books, making the science fair part of library improvement.

The main emphasis of the 517-student school is reading. Flynn School is one of the four elementary schools out of the city's 60 that has a librarian. California has only one librarian for every 6,000 students and is rated 51st out of 50 states and U.S. commonwealths in library spending. Frantz has

CONTINUED ON PAGE 15

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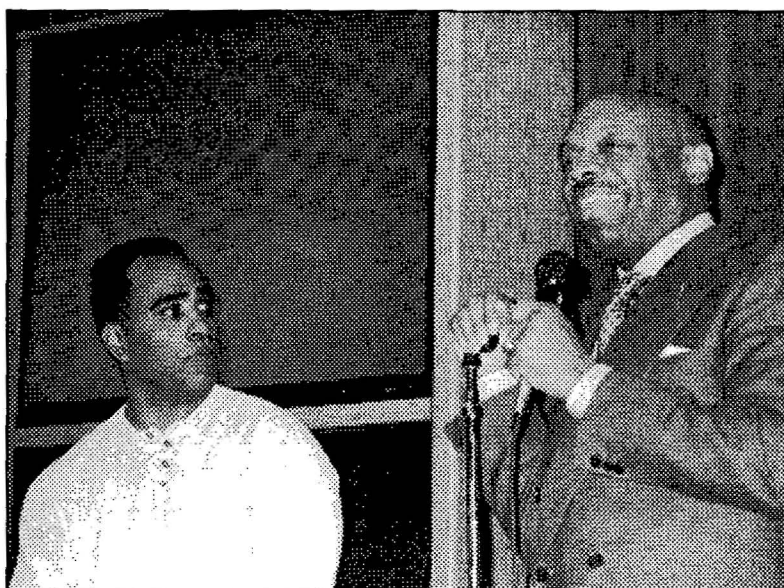
## Race car driver and SF mayor visit Paul Revere School

by Alejandro Cerda, 5th Grade,  
Classroom 203M

Wednesday, March 17, 1999, Willy T. Ribbs, a famous race car driver and the first and only African American driver to qualify for the Indy 500 came to Paul Revere Elementary School. A teacher at Paul Revere, Mrs. Lisa Bishop, called Willy R. and asked if he wanted to come to Paul Revere School and speak to the students about his career in race car driving. And he said yes. Mrs. Bishop and her 4th grade class faxed the Mayor of San Francisco, Willie Brown, asking him to come because Willy R. Ribbs is going to be at Paul Revere. His secretary read the fax to the mayor and his secretary said that he was going to come.

The students of Paul Revere started to ask Mr. Ribbs questions about his career. One of the questions was: "When you are driving are you nervous?" He said: "No, when I'm driving I concentrate on the road so I will not crash." Another question was: "When you are driving do you have ear plugs?" He said: "Yes, the ear plugs are also ear-phones and my crew talks to me and I answer with a microphone on my helmet." At that moment, the mayor Mr. Brown came in.

The Mayor talked to the students about how Willy T. Ribbs and he have been friends from when they were children. He also talked to the



Top: race car driver Willy T. Ribbs and Mayor Willie Brown. Bottom: Mayor Brown with Paul Revere student Davina Brooks after the assembly.

students about how one day they will be running the world and that Mr. Ribbs is a good example for

that. The last thing he talked to the students about was how to keep up the good work and studies.

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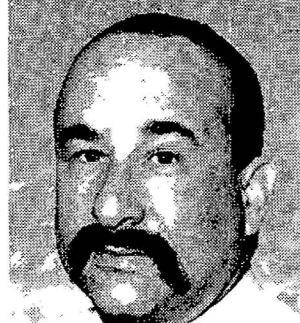
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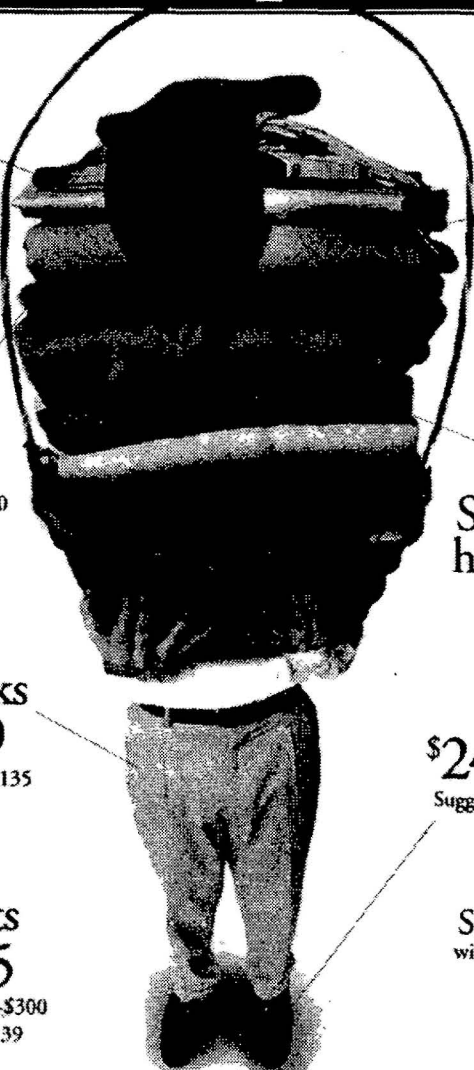
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2CRIME STOPPERS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

perform at full effectiveness without the support and involvement of the community in which it works. Representatives from Crime Stoppers will be contacting block clubs, community centers and church groups to make their acquaintance and to inform San Franciscans of the importance of their participation.

Anyone seeking more information on San Francisco Crime Stoppers or interested in possibly serving on the Board of Directors should call either 585-7021 or 824-1156. Direct participation will be welcome!

SCHOOL VOLUNTEER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

barnyard animals and back drop, to teach short vowel sounds through words and pictures such as lamb, hen, pig, frog and duck.

When she is not in Savoy's classroom, Ramos is volunteering with Amnesty International or the Feral Cat Team at the SPCA, editing, doing her art, or playing the piano. She is a natural and exemplary volunteer—an individual with a love of reading, a warm heart, and the desire to make a difference.

San Francisco School Volunteers is a non-profit organization founded in 1963, whose mission is to improve the public schools of San Francisco through informed parent, business, and community involvement. Last year, San Francisco School Volunteers placed 2500 volunteers in 112 San Francisco schools and arranged 80 partnerships between schools and businesses and community organizations. Like Ramos, you can be a part of the community by sharing your talents and time with children. Call 274-0250 for more information.

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## Bernal Hilltop Natural History: A non-success story of the Bernal flora

by Barbara M. Pitschel

During the peak of spring bloom it is always tempting to write about the most spectacularly visible displays of Bernal's wildflowers, plants that you can't possibly miss as you enjoy a stroll around the hilltop. Thanks to perfect soil, wind, moisture, and other growing conditions, and thanks also to our vigilant battle against the advance of particularly invasive weeds, we continue to protect and treasure healthy and sometimes growing populations of many exquisite native plants. But not all...

After thirty years of observing our hill, I can't avoid the fact that there are also some native species that definitely appear to be on the decline. It is important for us to be aware of these, with the hope that we can figure out what factors are interfering with the maintenance of stable populations of these plants and how to reverse the trend.

One such species is *Sidalcea malvaeflora*, wild hollyhock or checker bloom, a member of the mallow family (Malvaceae), which also includes such wide-ranging relatives as cotton, okra, hibiscus, cheeseweed, and the garden hollyhock. Checker bloom plants really stand out and can be easily spotted by their bright pink flowers. On Bernal they grow low with trailing stems, probably in response to wind. There is great variety in leaf shape on each plant. Basal leaves are scalloped, while stem leaves tend to be deeply lobed, but variations between these two extreme are common. There are two distinct types of flowers, borne on separate plants. Large pink flowers contain both male and female parts (stamens and pistils) and are botanically referred to as "perfect flowers." Other plants bear only smaller rose-colored flowers which lack stamens and are functionally female.

When I last wrote about checker nearly twenty years ago in a 1980 *Bernal Journal* article, I enthused, "In past years this plant has been abundant on the west slope between the middle and low trails. It is growing there this year as well, but an excellent

and easily accessible colony of plants may be seen above Ellsworth Street, slightly north of the crest trail."

Well, in recent years I am only able to readily cite one large healthy clump remaining from that west slope population. It lies along a user-worn trail that developed above the eroded access gullies above the Esmeralda Street stairs. There is also a small but healthy plant left from the colony above Ellsworth Street. You may see other individuals on the hill, but they are few and far between.

It is worth pondering the fact that the common name "checker" was originally chosen to describe the way this plant used to blanket California fields like the red squares on a checkerboard!

What is causing the decline of Bernal's checker bloom? We can only conjecture about some possible factors. The hilltop is getting much more intensive use

now than twenty years ago, particularly by the very large numbers of dogs that are allowed to run off trails trampling the native plant communities when the soil is wet and easily disturbed and eroded. Also, in some areas, weedy European annual grasses are crowding, smothering, and changing the micro-environment for many low-growing native wildflowers. We try to remove as much as possible of this excess biomass, but the job is more than a few volunteers can handle during a monthly work party. Of course it is possible that our checker population is just too small to withstand these impacts and maybe it just isn't able to produce sufficient functionally male flowers to sustain itself. But we must continue to try and we must not give up hope.

In future articles I will tell you about some of the other native Bernal plants that aren't doing so well. Maybe together we can find ways to improve conditions for their survival and betterment. You can certainly help by joining the Bernal Hilltop Native Grassland Restoration Project work parties at 11 a.m. on the third Sunday of each month. Call me at 282-5066 for details.



YOUTH LEADERSHIP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

weekend-long trip to Point Reyes proved to be a highly productive time as they discussed implementation of services, community organizing issues, and peer support issues. In addition, a weekend away from the City and getting in touch with nature was an added bonus for the youth. Many of them had never had the opportunity to go into the mountains and participate in a nature hike, and they truly enjoyed the experience. In fact, as the time approached for them to head back into the City, many bemoaned the fact that they had to leave such a peaceful spot.

BHNC thanks all the youth participants for their enthusiastic support and commitment. Congratulations on a highly productive and successful beginning of the year!

LEGISLATIVE SPRING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Every parent knows the dismal report card that California has been given recently. Currently, we rank 45th out of 50 in reading scores. Research has proven that if students do not read well by the end of the 3rd grade, they may never catch up. We must find the solutions or suffer dire consequences.

I support these proposals by Governor Davis. But there is much more on the education agenda this year. I just passed AB 36 off the Assembly Floor. If enacted, this bill would provide San Francisco Unified with \$12.7 million to help keep alive vital programs, such as art, music, and the GATE program for gifted children. I have also introduced a bill (AB 1031) that would create a grant program for schools to get up to \$50,000 for the Youth-to-Youth Peer Program, a peer counseling program.

Of equal importance is the environment in which our children learn, and their ability to safely go to and from school. Recognizing this, I am also carrying legislation (AB 1207) that will make our schools safer for kids by informing parents and teachers about pesticide use on school grounds. A study by the California Public Interest Research Group (CALPIRG) showed that 87 percent of school districts surveyed use one or more pesticides that are known or believed to cause cancer. Another bill I am co-

LEONARD FLYNN SCHOOL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

had the vision to fight for her library.

As a former reading teacher, Frantz also points to the monthly Read-Aloud program. In February it drew 100 parents and neighbors to visit classrooms to read to small groups of children.

Volunteers are essential at Flynn. Twenty-five volunteers work regularly in the school now, and Bernal Heights residents are invited to join them in helping with reading tutoring and literacy programs, computer work, gardening, and playground.

Children also need to belong to the larger community. They need caring adults to come into the school, spend time with them, and give the gift of hope and faith in their potential and their ability to pursue their dreams. To volunteer, call 695-5770.

authoring (AB 15) will help protect kids by requiring seat belts on all school buses manufactured after January 1, 2000. The overall cost, about \$2,000 per bus, is insignificant in comparison to the costs incurred in the event of a serious accident.

Other important issues, like healthcare reform, will also be a high priority this legislative season. Democrats are again introducing the Patient Bill of Rights, which is essentially a handful of healthcare reform bills, each authored by a different legislator, and each aimed at fixing part of what is broken in our current healthcare system. My bill, AB 142, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman bill, will require that consumers be given the assistance they need when they file complaints with the Department of Corporations, the agency responsible for handling complaints. One of the biggest problems consumers experience when they have a problem with their health plan is that they do not know whom to turn to. This bill will require each insurance company to provide a toll-free number and print that on all enrollment cards, so that consumers will know whom to call when they have a problem.

As you can see, we have an aggressive legislative agenda this year. I look forward to a very productive season and look forward, too, to your feedback and comments.

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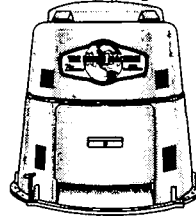
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